

Manibus Date Lilia Plenis

(An address delivered by the Reverend I. J. Semper to the Senior Class of Clarke College on October 24, 1931.)

I have been asked to talk to you during your regular assembly hour on the history and the implications of your class motto. Although I cannot claim to be an authority on class mottoes, I can assure you that it is both a privilege and a pleasure to speak to the Senior Class of Clarke College. I was not at all surprised to learn that a class, which I have always admired for its many talents, its scholarly work and its fine spirit of co-operation, had chosen a motto so rich in historical associations and so charged with spiritual significance. *Manibus Date Lilia Plenis*—what a marvellous motto for a Senior Class of Clarke College! Permit me to congratulate you.

The history of your motto falls into three distinct periods, which we may call the Virgilian period, the period of the flower symbolism of the Church, and the Dantean period.

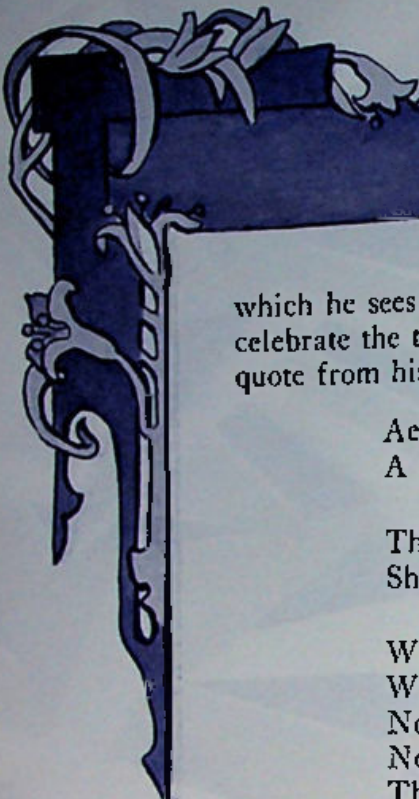
THE LILIES OF VIRGIL

The four words which constitute your motto derive from Virgil, and they are to be found in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*. If you would understand how they came to be there, you must go back in spirit to August 13, in the year 29 B. C. On that day ancient Rome witnessed the triumphal procession of Augustus Cæsar, who, having conquered Antony and Cleopatra, was then the undisputed master of the world. His procession of triumph filed along the Sacred Way, and it was led by Rome's stately senators. They were followed by thousands of marchers magnificently garbed, by countless wagons laden with the spoils of battle, and by rank after rank of legionnaires, their armor flashing in the sun and their military eagles held proudly on high. Immediately in front of his legions was Augustus Cæsar, clad in a purple tunic and a gold-embroidered robe, and riding in a splendid chariot drawn by four horses. The Emperor, of course, was the cynosure of all eyes, but undoubtedly many of the Romans who watched the procession on that hot August day allowed their

gaze to dwell on the two young boys who were mounted on the outside horses attached to the Emperor's chariot. On the left-hand horse rode Tiberius, thirteen years old, the stepson of Augustus. On the right-hand horse rode Marcus Marcellus, fourteen years old, the son of the Emperor's sister Octavia. Out of the vast multitude in the procession, if we except the Emperor himself, it was perhaps the young Marcellus who attracted the most attention, for no doubt it was already bruited about Rome that he was to be the future heir and successor of Augustus.

Augustus Cæsar had a daughter, Julia, by a previous marriage, but his marriage with the Empress Livia was childless. He therefore decreed that his nephew Marcellus should succeed him, and he arranged a marriage between Marcellus and Julia. The wedding of Marcellus and Julia took place four years after the triumphal procession, Marcellus being nineteen years of age, and Julia, fourteen. At the time of the marriage Augustus Cæsar was at the height of his power, and he deemed that by the marriage he had provided for the future of the Roman Empire. It was also about this time that he summoned Virgil, the great poet of the age, and commissioned him to write a poem which would glorify Rome. Thus the *Aeneid* came to be written. Before Virgil had advanced very far in the composition of his masterpiece, the Emperor's golden dream for the future of the Empire, involving the handsome young bridegroom and the charming young bride, was rudely shattered. Marcellus died in his twenty-first year. Rome was overwhelmed with grief, for Marcellus was young, handsome, manly and popular, the adopted son of Augustus, the husband of Julia, and the idol of his mother Octavia. His funeral rites were memorable, the Emperor himself delivering the oration.

The poet who had been commissioned by the Emperor to sing the glories of Rome, and who was then engaged in his task, felt that he could not pass over this tragic event in the life of his patron. And it was thus that he was inspired to compose one of the finest passages in the *Aeneid*. In the sixth book Aeneas journeys through the underworld, and there he, the future founder of Rome, learns something of the future glory of Rome. The story of the young Marcellus is prophesied to him, and the prophecy is accompanied by a vision in



which he sees Marcellus both in life and in death. This year we celebrate the tercentenary of the birth of John Dryden, and I shall quote from his translation of the *Aeneid*:

Aeneas here beheld, of form divine,
A godlike youth in glitt'ring armor shine.

This youth (the blissful vision of a day)
Shall just be shown on earth, and snatch'd away.

What fun'ral pomp shall floating Tiber see,
When, rising from his bed, he views the sad solemnity!
No youth shall equal hopes of glory give,
No youth afford so great a cause to grieve;
The Trojan honor, and the Roman boast,
Admir'd when living, and ador'd when lost!

Full canisters of fragrant lilies bring,
Mix'd with the purple roses of the spring;
Let me with fun'ral flow'rs his body strow,
This gift which parents to their children owe,
This unavailing gift, at least, I may bestow!

The entire passage dealing with the future greatness of Rome mounts to a superb climax when Virgil sings of Marcellus, of his beauty and his manliness, of his early death and his funeral rites. Virgil himself read this passage for Augustus Cæsar and Octavia. We are told that, when he came to the lines describing the scattering of the lilies over the dead body of Marcellus, the mother swooned away.

Manibus Date Lilia Plenis—what a story is bound up in those four words, the story of a boy and a girl, of an emperor and a poet, of the glory of youth and the gloom of the grave! But apart from their story, those four words are steeped in the music and magic of poetry. We know the occasion which inspired them, but how did Virgil hit upon that lovely combination? There is no accounting for a combination like *Manibus Date Lilia Plenis*. It is a secret of genius, a miracle in language. All that we can do is to treasure Virgil's words, and to be grateful to him for them.

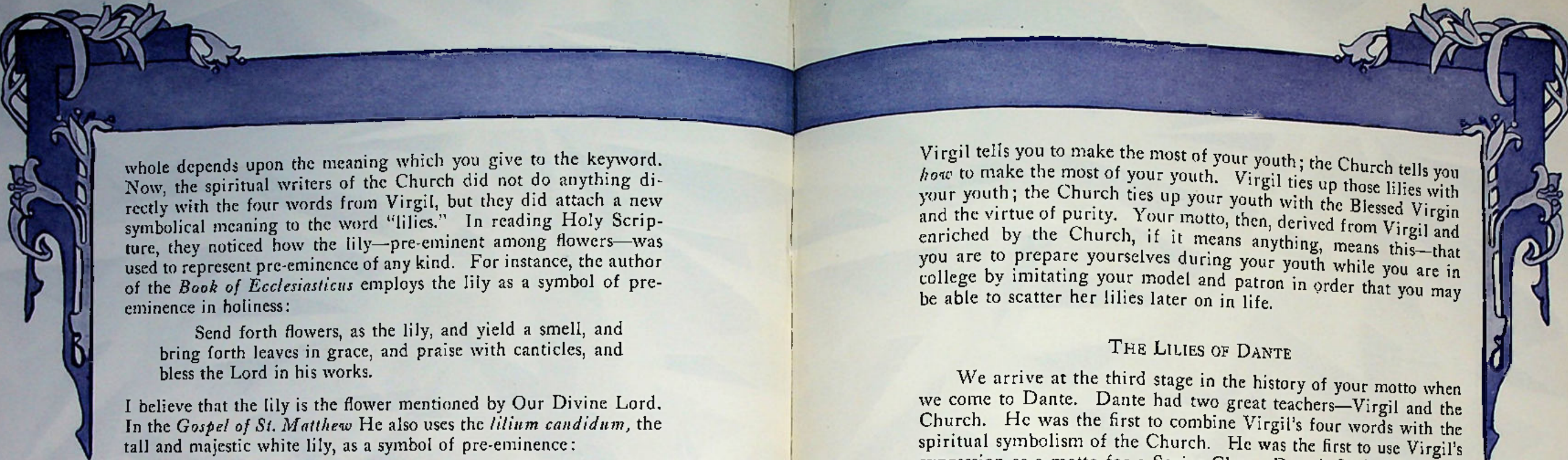


The further question arises, If we were to stop with Virgil, what meaning have those four words as a motto for a Senior Class in Clarke College? We know that Virgil used those words in connection with a funeral ceremony. But we also know that the *Aeneid* for centuries was interpreted as an allegory of human life, and hence that every prominent incident in the poem was given a symbolical meaning. What symbolical meaning can we give to the scattering of lilies over the dead Marcellus? Marcellus stands for youth, and the lily symbolizes the two main characteristics of youth. Youth is as lovely as a lily, and it is as transitory as a lily. If therefore you take Virgil's words as they stand—"Scatter lilies with full hands"—you evidently want to stress the period of life through which you are now passing, with all its charm and its evanescence. And if you scatter lilies, which symbolize beauty and brevity, over your own youth, surely it is because you wish to draw the practical conclusion from the fact that your springtime is so brief. If your youth is as brief as the blooming of a lily, oh, then you must employ it to the best advantage, you must make it your seedtime, you must sow now in order that you may be able to reap later on. In this allegorical sense the words—"Scatter lilies with full hands"—taken as a class motto, would be a constant reminder to you that the beautiful period through which you are now passing will be over before you realize it, and hence that you must lose no time if you are going to profit by it. There is meaning, therefore, in your motto, even if we did not go beyond Virgil. The Virgilian stage, however, is only the first stage in the history of your motto, and if we wish to gather all its implications we must proceed to the other stages.

THE LILIES OF THE CHURCH

The Church has always fallen back upon symbols to explain her doctrines and practices. In the Middle Ages the Schoolmen, holding with Hugh of St. Victor that all nature speaks God, went to nature for symbols of divine truth. Among the symbols drawn from nature to convey religious teaching, none have played a more prominent rôle than flowers. You will notice that the keyword of your motto is the word "lilies." The meaning of your motto as a





whole depends upon the meaning which you give to the keyword. Now, the spiritual writers of the Church did not do anything directly with the four words from Virgil, but they did attach a new symbolical meaning to the word "lilies." In reading Holy Scripture, they noticed how the lily—pre-eminent among flowers—was used to represent pre-eminence of any kind. For instance, the author of the *Book of Ecclesiasticus* employs the lily as a symbol of pre-eminence in holiness:

Send forth flowers, as the lily, and yield a smell, and bring forth leaves in grace, and praise with canticles, and bless the Lord in his works.

I believe that the lily is the flower mentioned by Our Divine Lord. In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* He also uses the *lilium candidum*, the tall and majestic white lily, as a symbol of pre-eminence:

Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Spiritual writers took their cue from the Bible, and they employed the lily first of all to symbolize pre-eminence in virtue. They associated it in particular with the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom Chaucer names "Flower of Virgins all," and whom Wordsworth styles "Our tainted nature's solitary boast." Thus, when St. Bernard read the words in the *Cantic of Canticles*—"as the lily among thorns"—he interpreted those words as referring to the Blessed Virgin, who is as pre-eminent among human beings as a lily is among thorns.

The whiteness of the lily suggested a second symbolical meaning to spiritual writers. They constituted the lily not only the symbol of pre-eminence in virtue but also the symbol of purity. In this second sense the lily was again associated with the Blessed Virgin, but as a symbol of purity it was also associated in Catholic literature and art with St. Joseph and other saints, whose lives had been characterized by innocence and chastity.

Now, if you take these two symbolical meanings with which the Church has enriched the word lily, Virgil's expression, "Scatter lilies with full hands," becomes steeped in spiritual significance.

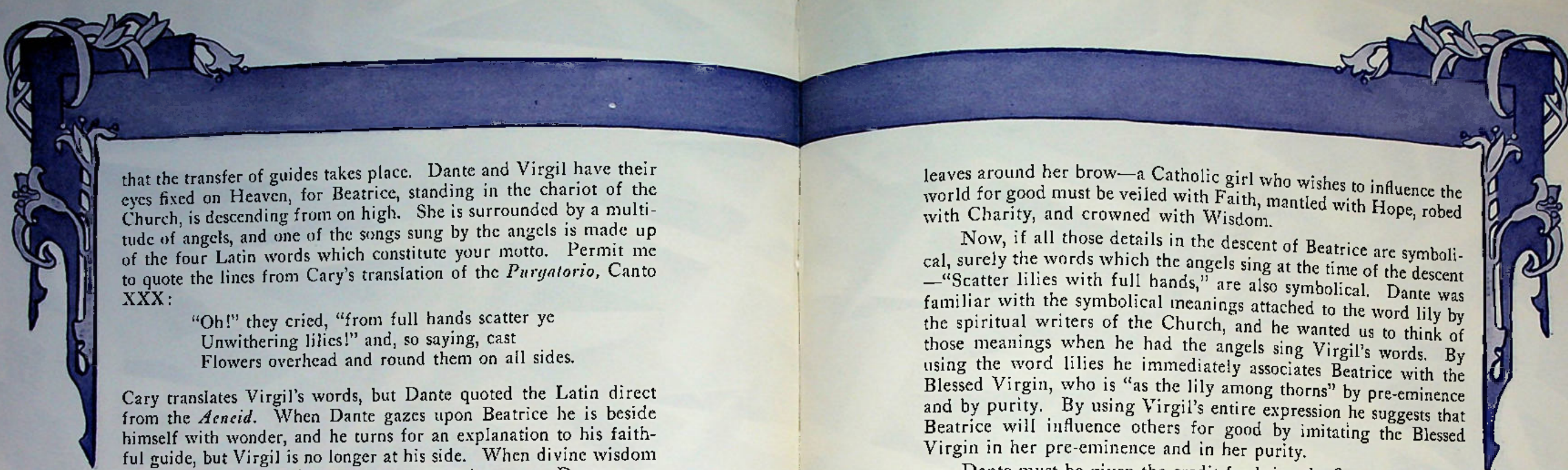
Virgil tells you to make the most of your youth; the Church tells you *how* to make the most of your youth. Virgil ties up those lilies with your youth; the Church ties up your youth with the Blessed Virgin and the virtue of purity. Your motto, then, derived from Virgil and enriched by the Church, if it means anything, means this—that you are to prepare yourselves during your youth while you are in college by imitating your model and patron in order that you may be able to scatter her lilies later on in life.

THE LILIES OF DANTE

We arrive at the third stage in the history of your motto when we come to Dante. Dante had two great teachers—Virgil and the Church. He was the first to combine Virgil's four words with the spiritual symbolism of the Church. He was the first to use Virgil's expression as a motto for a Senior Class. Dante's Senior Class was quite small; in fact, there was only one girl in it, and her name was Beatrice.

In the *Divine Comedy* Dante tells the story of his journey through Hell, Purgatory and Heaven. He has two guides: when he descends into Hell and when he climbs the mountain of Purgatory, he is accompanied by Virgil; when he passes through the ten spheres of Heaven, he is accompanied by Beatrice. Why did he select Virgil as his guide through Hell and Purgatory? In the Middle Ages Virgil was not only regarded as a poet but also as a prophet, a philosopher, a teacher of the highest wisdom, and hence Dante constituted Virgil the symbol of human reason at its best. Human reason at its best can tell us what a vile thing sin is, and likewise it can bid us to repent when we have sinned. Now, the symbolical meaning of Dante's Hell is sin, and the symbolical meaning of his Purgatory is repentance. Virgil can guide Dante through Hell and Purgatory, but when Dante is just about to start his journey through Heaven, Virgil, who symbolizes human wisdom, disappears, and his place is taken by Beatrice, who symbolizes divine wisdom.

Dante represents Purgatory as a high mountain which rises from this earth, with its summit above the clouds. On the top of this mountain is a plateau, the Earthly Paradise, and it is on this plateau



that the transfer of guides takes place. Dante and Virgil have their eyes fixed on Heaven, for Beatrice, standing in the chariot of the Church, is descending from on high. She is surrounded by a multitude of angels, and one of the songs sung by the angels is made up of the four Latin words which constitute your motto. Permit me to quote the lines from Cary's translation of the *Purgatorio*, Canto XXX:

"Oh!" they cried, "from full hands scatter ye
Unwithering lilies!" and, so saying, cast
Flowers overhead and round them on all sides.

Cary translates Virgil's words, but Dante quoted the Latin direct from the *Aeneid*. When Dante gazes upon Beatrice he is beside himself with wonder, and he turns for an explanation to his faithful guide, but Virgil is no longer at his side. When divine wisdom appears on the scene, human reason must give way. Dante turns back to Beatrice but not even her incomparable loveliness can prevent the tears from welling up in his eyes.

Do you see why Dante quoted those four Latin words in the *Divine Comedy*? When the moment of parting came, Dante paid his guide—the poet from whom he had learned so much—a supreme tribute. Virgil had to depart but he departed with his own words ringing in his ears—sung by angels. And if Dante selected those four words out of the entire *Aeneid* to pay a supreme tribute to Virgil, it must have been because he regarded them as poetically most beautiful.

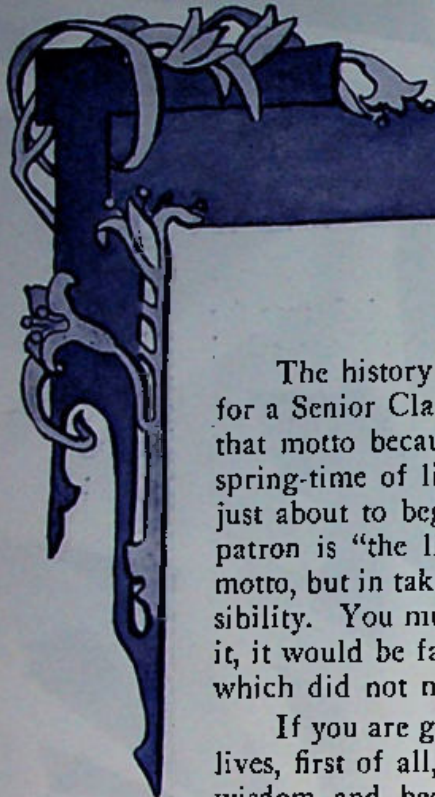
Dante quoted Virgil's words because they are beautiful poetry, but not for that reason alone. Dante never wrote or quoted beautiful poetry for its own sake. We must remember that the descent of Beatrice in all its details is symbolical. Beatrice stands not only for divine wisdom but also for the ideal Catholic girl. From one standpoint the *Divine Comedy* is an idealization of womanhood. In the descent of Beatrice Dante indicates how a Catholic girl can influence the world for good. Beatrice descends in the chariot of the Church—a Catholic girl who wishes to influence the world for good must be a faithful member of the Church. Beatrice wears a white veil, a green mantle and a red robe, and she has a garland of olive

leaves around her brow—a Catholic girl who wishes to influence the world for good must be veiled with Faith, mantled with Hope, robed with Charity, and crowned with Wisdom.

Now, if all those details in the descent of Beatrice are symbolical, surely the words which the angels sing at the time of the descent—"Scatter lilies with full hands," are also symbolical. Dante was familiar with the symbolical meanings attached to the word lily by the spiritual writers of the Church, and he wanted us to think of those meanings when he had the angels sing Virgil's words. By using the word lilies he immediately associates Beatrice with the Blessed Virgin, who is "as the lily among thorns" by pre-eminence and by purity. By using Virgil's entire expression he suggests that Beatrice will influence others for good by imitating the Blessed Virgin in her pre-eminence and in her purity.

Dante must be given the credit for being the first to see the application of Virgil's words as enriched by the flower symbolism of the Church to a young girl. Virgil associated his expression with a young man who symbolized youth. Dante kept the idea of youth but he associated the expression with a young girl. Virgil used his expression over the dead body of a young man. Dante used the expression over a young girl who is so full of life that we can call her a spiritual powerhouse. Virgil used his expression as pointing to the past, as a fitting close to the life of Marcellus. Dante used the expression as pointing to the future, as a prologue to what Beatrice was to do. When Beatrice descends from Heaven she is just about to begin her work of teaching and influencing Dante for good. In a very true sense she stands for the ideal Catholic college girl who is just about to graduate, and who is going out to teach and influence the world for good.

To sum up, therefore, we may say that your motto—"Scatter lilies with full hands"—has the following history: Virgil wrote the words and he associated his words with the beauty and the brevity of youth; the Church enriched Virgil's expression by associating the chief word in it with the Blessed Virgin as a symbol of her pre-eminence and her purity; Dante, a pupil of Virgil and the Church, applied Virgil's expression thus enriched by the Church to a young girl—the ideal college graduate.



THE LILIES OF CLARKE COLLEGE

The history of your motto proves that it is a marvelous motto for a Senior Class of Clarke College. You have every right to use that motto because you fulfill all the conditions. You are in the spring-time of life; you are in the last year of college, and hence just about to begin your work in the world; and your model and patron is "the lily among thorns." You have every right to the motto, but in taking it you are thereby undertaking a serious responsibility. You must live up to it. If you do not intend to live up to it, it would be far better for you to have chosen another motto, one which did not mean so much.

If you are going to scatter the lilies of the Blessed Virgin, your lives, first of all, must be characterized by pre-eminence in virtue, wisdom and beauty. The training which you have received in Clarke College is a training for pre-eminence, but it is not given to you for selfish ends. What Beatrice was to Dante, you should be to the world. If you are to scatter the lilies of pre-eminence, you must teach the lessons of wisdom and self-control which you have learned here, you must carry into your homes the brave and beautiful habits which you have formed here, you must influence the world by lives of loyalty and devotion to the high spiritual ideals of your Alma Mater.

In the spiritual order purity is power. It was the source of Mary's power, and it must be the source of your power. You cannot scatter the lilies of her who was without spot or stain, unless you imitate her by lives of pre-eminence in the virtue of purity. To-day, as a result of the World War, we are living in a period of moral confusion. Shakspeare's line, "Fair is foul, and foul is fair," may be taken as an accurate description of an age in which, especially in matters of sex, evil is made to take on the appearance of good, and good is made to look like evil. It will not do to confuse the unwithering lilies of purity with the festering lilies which, as Shakspeare warns us, smell far worse than weeds. If your motto means anything, it means that you are determined to imitate the Immaculate Mother by lives in which the white lilies of purity will shine brightly.

Thus far, in drawing out the practical implications of your motto, I have stressed the keyword. The words, "with full hands," should not be passed over lightly. If you wish to be effective in scattering the lilies of pre-eminence and of purity, you must scatter with full hands, you must do the thing in a big way, you must do it with your heart and soul, you must not only give the lilies but you must also give yourselves. In fact, unless you are in dead earnest about it, you will not find your hands full of lilies.

I have kept the verb *Date* until last. That verb can be translated either by "give" or by "scatter." In either case it denotes a positive action. You cannot "give" or "scatter" unless you do something. Now, there are two ways of resisting the temptations of the world. In the Greek mythology, when Ulysses and his sailors came near the island of the Sirens and heard their seductive music intended to woo mariners to destruction, Ulysses stopped the ears of his sailors with cotton to shut out the tempting strains. That is one way of resisting evil—the negative way. You can fight the temptations of the world by simply holding the lilies in your hands, but that is not the best way to influence others. When Orpheus and his crew sailed past the island of the Sirens, he took out his lyre and struck up sweeter music so that the voices of the Sirens were no longer heard. That is the second way of resisting evil—the positive way. To scatter the lilies means to conquer evil by filling your own lives and the lives of others with good. The verb in your motto is a clarion call to courageous action.

In conclusion, permit me once more to congratulate you on your motto and to wish you every success in your efforts to model your lives on it. May the Blessed Mother and the valiant women of your Year Book be a constant inspiration to you to scatter lilies with full hands!



Alumnae

True loyalty and fragrant memories form a fitting background for the activities of the Clarke College Alumnae organization. For years it has been the greatest bond linking the old life at college with the life in the world far from Alma Mater but not forgetting her nor forgotten by her.

The biennial reunion of the Alumnae was held at Clarke, May 29, 30, 31, 1931. The graduates of '31 were received into the Alumnae Association as new members and the class of '32 as associate members, on the first morning. At the business meeting that followed officers were elected:

Mrs. Clara J. Doherty, La Crosse, Wisconsin, *President*.

Mrs. Mary B. Finan, Chicago, Illinois, *First Vice-president*.

Mrs. Laura B. Bryant, Waterloo, Iowa, *Second Vice-president*.

Miss Mercedes Aurit, Dubuque, Iowa, *Third Vice-president*.

Miss Maureen Kinnane, Elgin, Illinois, *Recording Secretary*.

Mrs. Genevieve Wilken, Chicago, Illinois, *Corresponding Sec'y*.

Mrs. Mary F. Goggin, Chicago, Illinois, *Treasurer*.

Miss Leona Heim, Dubuque, Iowa, *Historian*.

During their stay the alumnae enjoyed the use of the natatorium, played bridge, visited Mount Carmel. The concluding event was the Alumnae banquet.

Mrs. Doherty reports that plans are being made now for the reunion scheduled for 1933. This date was decided on as particularly appropriate because it is the centennial of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The members of the Class of '32 appreciate the well-wishing of the organization and pledge strong support in all its undertakings.

Greetings to the Class of 1932:



Mrs. C. J. Doherty

College women tell us that half of the worth of their four years spent in school halls is in the firm and strong friendships made in the daily routine of class and extra-curricular life. These friendships are carried on in many ways but probably the best method of keeping alive the old associations is through participating in the work of Alumnae groups. With this idea in mind, the opening paragraph of the constitution of the Clarke College Alumnae Association reads that—"It shall be the object . . . to unite the present with the past, to recall its memories and to preserve its spirit; to strengthen the mutual love and sympathy of its members; to draw its members closer to their Alma Mater and thus further the interests of Clarke College by extending her influence and perpetuating her work."

As President of the Clarke College Alumnae Association, I greet you and welcome you as Alumnae. In doing this, I am conscious that the chain binding the Alumnae to our Alma Mater is being strengthened by adding this last link to it—by you—the youngest members in our Association. May I ask of you real loyalty to the school of which you are now one of its "old girls." You can do so much to repay the many kindnesses received from the dear Sisters during the last four years—you can do so by keeping alive the traditions of our school—by encouraging other pupils to attend it—by coming to reunions and by many ways and many means, showing your devotion to its interests. I know you will find, each one of you, as I have found, that there is something—rather indefinable—that you have gained during your school years at Clarke College that nothing, that nobody, can take from you. You may experience sor-

row, illness, disappointment—many things may come to you—but down through the years—this indefinable something will rise to strengthen and comfort you.

We are told so often that there never was a time when the world was so poor in leadership—You have been taught leadership so I know that the world will be the better for your being.

Most sincerely I am your friend as well as a sister Alumna—

(Mrs. John F.) Clara Jacobson Doherty, '93.



To the Faculty and Seniors of Clarke College:

It is with profound pride and deepest appreciation, that we, the Class of 1931, extend our sincerest felicitations to you, the Class of 1932. Well do we realize your untiring efforts to make your fondest dreams come true. You have in every way equalled, if not excelled the high standards set by your predecessors.

Our annual, though still young in years, portends to grow and prosper. We bespeak a fruitful future. With eagerness, we looked forward to its appearance, and our expectations have been more than realized.

To some, perhaps the third anniversary of its birth means little, but to us who have left the sheltered walls of Alma Mater, it means more than words can tell. It comes as a message from "our dear Mother" calling her children to once again share and enjoy her activities. It brings us back to friends we loved best and renews the years so filled with happy memories.

Class of '31,
Mary Lou Byrnes.



Mary L. Byrnes



The Chicago Chapter also writes:

Chicago Chapter Clarke College Alumnae initiated the activities of the year after our first social and business luncheon in the fall, with a Communion Breakfast held on December 5th.

The privilege of using Quigley's beautiful chapel was given us for the occasion. A private chapel brought us close to our own College Chapel so dear to all of us. Monsignor Mahoney, rector of Quigley said the Mass and preached the sermon. His talk stressed the responsibility of Catholic College trained women in fostering and spreading the ideal acquired while at Clarke College. A breakfast at the Illinois Women's Athletic Club followed at which moving pictures taken at the last reunion were shown.

Our Holiday Dance at the Congress Hotel on January 5 was the next event. It attracted not only our own members but present students at Clarke and out-of-town alumnae. A pleasure it was to have them with us. We trust that seeing old friends and dancing to the music of the orchestra was as enjoyable to them as it proved to be to us.

The third and last event was the annual card party held at the Illinois Women's Athletic Club on April 2nd. The party last spring at the Edgewater Beach Hotel was such a lovely one we set it as a standard to follow. By no means an easy criterion. Our commentators said it stood the test.

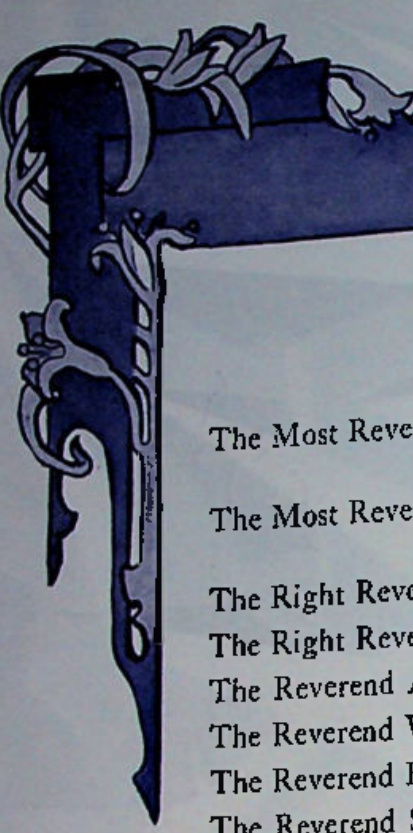
May I on the part of the Chicago Chapter extend to the Class of 1932 our heartfelt congratulations and may you always cherish in your heart and strive to attain the beautiful ideals of Clarke College.

Sincerely,

Virginia Phillips Moran, (Mrs. Edward Moran),
President Chicago Chapter.

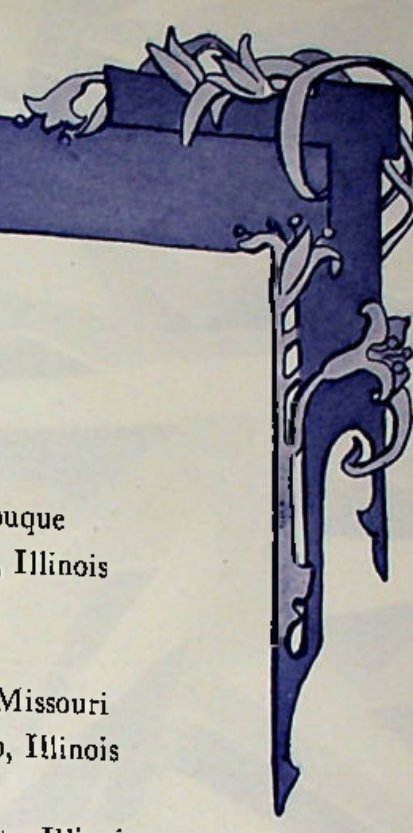






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Lange's Cleaners Company, Dubuque
McFadden Coffee and Spice Company, Dubuque
Thomas J. Mulgrew Coal Company, Dubuque
Mecca Studio, Dubuque
Mould Studio, Dubuque
Roshek Brothers, Dubuque
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L'ENVOI

Adieu, fair Lady of the shadowed hall,
Perhaps I have not sung my song in vain,
If you but hold it, this will be my all.
My lute will find the melody again.